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ABSTRACT

Three hundred and fifty Buffalo public school second graders, most of whom were Negro, were transferred in spring, 1966 from an inner-city school to schools 90 percent or more white. Two hundred and ten second graders, mostly Negro, were transferred from an adjacent inner-city school to five other peripheral schools. A comparison was made of the pre- and post-transfer scores on the Paragraph Meaning and Word Meaning sections of the Stanford Achievement Test obtained from a sample of 54 transfer students and 60 students not transferred and therefore still in an inner-city school. Pupils who were transferred from the inner-city school to peripheral schools show significantly greater gains when they are compared with pupils who remained in inner-city schools. Further, teacher evaluation of achievement and adjustment to school and classroom procedures on the part of all pupils, grades one through six, who were bussed from the inner-city, show significant positive change. (JM)

ED037496

BUFFALO PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BUFFALO, NEW YORK

# STUDY OF ACHIEVEMENT IN READING OF PUPILS TRANSFERRED FROM SCHOOLS 15 AND 37 TO PERIPHERAL SCHOOLS TO ELIMINATE OVERCROWDING, TO ABANDON AN OBSOLETE SCHOOL, AND TO ACHIEVE A MORE DESIRABLE RACIAL BALANCE IN CITY SCHOOLS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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Division of Curriculum Evaluation and Development

March 1967

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Board Meeting
March 22, 1967

REPORT: Achievement in Reading of Pupils Transferred from Schools 15 and 37 to Peripheral Schools

Negro children progress more rapidly in reading when they are transferred from de-facto segregated inner city schools to schools outside the core area and are placed in integrated classes. Furthermore, in the opinion of their teachers, these children also gain in self-confidence, develop improved study habits and adopt improved behavior characteristics.

These conclusions result from a study conducted by the Buffalo Public Schools of children transferred in November 1965 from two inner city schools to peripheral schools in the city. The transfers were made to eliminate overcrowding, to abandon an obsolete school, and to achieve a more desirable racial balance in city schools.

Public School 15, a K-3 school located in a business and industrial area of downtown Buffalo, was ordered closed by the Board of Education in November 1965. Approximately 350 pupils, most of whom were Negro children, were transported by bus to twelve different schools where the student population was 90 percent or more white. In addition, about 210 pupils in grades 1-7 were transferred from Public School 37, an adjacent inner city school, to five other peripheral schools in order to reduce class size in School 37.

Prior to these transfers, in October 1965, all second grade pupils in Schools 15 and 37 were given the Paragraph Meaning and Word Meaning section of the Stanford Achievement Test, Primary Level. The Paragraph Meaning test provides a functional measure of the child's ability to comprehend connected discourse ranging in length from simple sentences to paragraphs of five sentences and involving levels of comprehension varying from extremely simple recognition to the making of inferences from several related sentences. The Word Meaning test measures recognition of words, especially synonyms, simple definitions and associations. Together they provide an effective index of the child's reading ability.

These tests revealed that the second graders in both schools were reading below grade level. In paragraph meaning they tested 1.8 and in word meaning 1.7 against a grade norm of 2.2.

In November 1966, 70 of these children, now in third grade, were identified in the peripheral schools. Fifty-four were retested with the Stanford Test. The 16 other pupils were absent on the days of the testing or were unavailable for some reason.

At the same time 74 third grade pupils in School 37 who had been tested in second grade (October 1965) were retested. A random sample of 60 of these third graders was made in order to provide a group comparable to the 54 pupils tested in peripheral schools.

The results of these tests are shown in Tables A, B, and C.

TABLE A

Scores of Former Pupils of Schools 15 and 37 Who Were Transferred to Peripheral Schools

| | 10/65 SECOND GRADE | | 11/66 THIRD GRADE | | GROWTH DIFFERENCE FROM 2nd to 3rd GRADE | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | PM | WM | PM | WM | PM | WM |
| RANGE | 1.3-3.7 | 1.2-4.3 | 1.8-5.5 | 1.4-4.7 | --- | --- |
| MEAN | 1.80 | 1.70 | 2.70 | 3.10 | .900 | 1.40 |
| MEDIAN | 1.82 | 1.71 | 2.73 | 2.91 | .900 | 1.25 |

NORMS: 10/65 - 2.2, 11/66 - 3.3

N = 54 Number of transferred pupils tested

PM = Paragraph Meaning

WM = Word Meaning

TABLE B

Scores of Pupils Who Remained in School 37 Through the Testing Period

| | 10/65 SECOND GRADE | | 11/66 THIRD GRADE | | GROWTH DIFFERENCE FROM 2nd to 3rd GRADE | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | PM | WM | PM | WM | PM | WM |
| RANGE | 0.0-2.3 | 0.0.-2.4 | 1.0-4.0 | 1.1-4.0 | --- | --- |
| MEAN | 1.67 | 1.61 | 2.27 | 2.39 | .600 | .780 |
| MEDIAN | 1.80 | 1.70 | 2.10 | 2.40 | .300 | .700 |

N = 60 Number of School 37 pupils tested

PM = Paragraph Meaning

WM = Word Meaning

TABLE C

Growth in Reading of Pupils
Transferred from Schools 15 and 37
to Peripheral Schools Compared
with Pupils Remaining at School 37

| | PARAGRAPH MEANING | | WORD MEANING | | GROWTH DIFFERENCE FROM 2nd to 3rd GRADE | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 10/65 PRE | 11/66 POST | 10/65 PRE | 11/66 POST | PM | WM |
| Pupils Transferred to Peripheral Schools | 1.8 | 2.7 | 1.7 | 2.9 | .9 | 1.2 |
| Pupils Remaining at School 37 | 1.8 | 2.1 | 1.7 | 2.4 | .3 | .7 |

All scores are median scores. Instrument: Stanford Achievement Test (Primary Level) Forms J and L

Pre-Test N = 54 2nd grade

Post-Test N = 60 3rd grade

Norms: Pre-Test - 2.2

Post-Test - 3.3

Examination of these tables shows that the 54 pupils transferred to peripheral schools scored 2.7 in paragraph meaning or a growth of .9 in the 11 months from October 1965 to November 1966. In word meaning they scored 2.9 or a growth of 1.2 during this same period. The 60 pupils who remained in School 37 scored 2.1 on the paragraph meaning test, a gain of .3 and 2.4 on the word meaning, a growth of .7. Expected growth from October 1965 to November 1966 would be 1.1.

It is apparent that the transferred pupils made significantly greater gains than did the pupils who remained at School 37. Since the two groups of pupils were similar in educational achievement in October 1965, it seems reasonable to assume that the differences in growth are related to the changed school environment of the transferred pupils.

In an attempt to gain further insight into the effects of transferring pupils from Schools 15 and 37 to peripheral schools, the 38 teachers in the schools who had received these children into their classrooms in November 1965 were asked (one year later,) to respond to the six questions listed below:

1. Does the achievement level of these pupils seem to be better?
2. Do you feel the pupil's study habits have improved?
3. Do you feel the pupils demonstrate more confidence in doing their work?

4. Do you feel the pupils demonstrate better behavior characteristics?

5. Do the pupils show a greater willingness to cooperate with the teacher?

6. Do they seem to get along better with fellow students?

The teacher responses are summarized in Table D.

TABLE D

Teacher Responses to Questions Related to Pupil Achievement and Adjustment to School and Classroom Situations (in percentages of teachers responding)

| Question # | YES | NO |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 68.0 | 32.0 |
| 2 | 68.1 | 31.9 |
| 3 | 72.6 | 27.4 |
| 4 | 64.0 | 36.0 |
| 5 | 58.9 | 41.1 |
| 6 | 73.5 | 26.5 |

N = 38 teachers responding
Grade range = 1 - 6

The teacher responses are significantly positive in each area surveyed and reflect a desirable growth pattern on the part of the transferred pupils.

In summary, the study of the growth in reading achievement between second grade pupils tested in October 1965 and the same pupils tested in third grade in November 1966 shows significantly greater gains on the part of the pupils who were transferred from the Inner City to peripheral schools when they are compared with pupils who remained in inner city schools.

Further, teacher evaluation of achievement and adjustment to school and classroom procedures on the part of all pupils, grades 1-6, who were bussed from the Inner City show significant positive change.

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